Ile not be made a soft and dull-ey'd foole,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yeeld
To Christian intercessors: follow not,
Ile haue no speaking, I will haue my bond.

Exit Iew.

Sol. It is the most impenetrable curre
That euer kept with men.
Ant. Let him alone,
Ile follow him no more with bootlesse prayers.
He seekes my life, his reason well I know:
I oft deliuer'd from his forfeitures
Many that haue at times made moue to mee,
Therefore he hates me.
Sal. I am sure the Duke will neuer grant
This forfeyture to hold.
An. The Duke cannot deny the course of Law:
For the commodity that strangers haue
With vs in Venice, if it be denied,
Will much impeach the iustice of his state,
Since that the trade and profit of the City
Consisteth of all Nations. Therefore goe,
These greefes and losses haue so bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To morrow, to my bloody Creditor.
VVell Iaylor on, pray God *Bassanio* come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not. *Exeunt.*

Enter Portia, Nerrissa, Lorenzo, Iessica, and a man of Portias.

Lor. Madam, although I speake it in your presence,
You haue a noble and a true conceite
Of God-like amity, which appeares most strongly,
In bearing thus the absence of your Lord.
But if you knew to whom you shew this honour,
How true a Gentleman you send releese,

How deere a louer of my Lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the worke,
Then customary bounty can enforce you.
Por. I neuer did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now: for in companions
That do conuerse and waste the time together,
Whose soules do beare an equall yoke of loue,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit:
Which makes me thinke, that this *Anthonio*
(Being the bosome-louer of my Lord) ſt
Must needs be like my Lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I haue bestowed
In purchasing the semblance of my soule,
From out the state of hellish misery.
This comes too neere the praising of my selfe,
Therefore no more of it: heere other things
Lorenzo I commit into your hands,
The husbandry and manage of my house,
Vntill my Lords returne. For mine owne part,
I haue toward heauen breath'd a secret vow,
To liue in prayer and contemplation,
Onely attended by *Nerrissa* heere,
Vntill her husband, and my Lords returne.
There is a Monastery two miles off,
And there will we abide. I do desire you,
Not to deny this imposition,
The which my loue, and some necessity
Now layes vpon you.
Lor. Madame, with all my heart,
I shall obey you in all faire commands.
Por. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and *Iessica*,
In place of Lord *Bassanio* and my selfe.
And so farewell till we shall meete againe.
Lor. Faire thoughts & happy hours attend on you.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice* (STC 22297) LONDON, 1600 [1619] THE BRITISH LIBRARY (C.12.g.31) Octavo